

Leading Clinician Program

A successful initiative aligning Allied Health workforce development and best practice in clinical governance!

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INTRODUCTION

The Leading Clinicians Program is SA Health's state-wide interprofessional clinical leadership development program, developed by SA Health's Clinical Leadership and Team Effectiveness Unit Director, Heidi Silverston, and Lead Facilitator, Kristina Judd. The program has run continuously since 2016 and is strongly supported by clinicians of all disciplines, who attest that the program has resulted in; gains in knowledge and skills; changes in leadership behaviour, attitudes and perceptions and quality improvement capability.

This multidisciplinary program is specifically tailored for the SA Health context and aims to address six formal learning outcomes:

- Building leadership and management capability
- Creating ongoing capacity for change
- **Embedding continuous quality improvement (QI)**
- Influencing workplace culture
- Developing a networked and integrated health system
- Enhancing patient-centred care

Structure of the LCP Program

The program comprised six full-day workshops, four full-day action learning sets, five individual coaching sessions and 360-degree feedback. Online inventories covered team roles, values and leadership behaviours, and each participant undertook a patient-centred quality improvement (QI) project.

Participants were supported throughout the program by 12 experienced clinical leaders undertaking facilitator roles, in conjunction with the Director and Lead Facilitator. Facilitators themselves undertook a parallel program of professional development, guided by the program's Director and Lead Facilitator.



The aim of the project was to identify allied health and scientific health participants' QI projects and their alignment with clinical governance using the accreditation standards.

METHOD

Data mining has been applied to the detailed curated data of all the QI projects since 2022, allowing the extraction of the allied and scientific health data separately from the nurses and midwives and medical data.

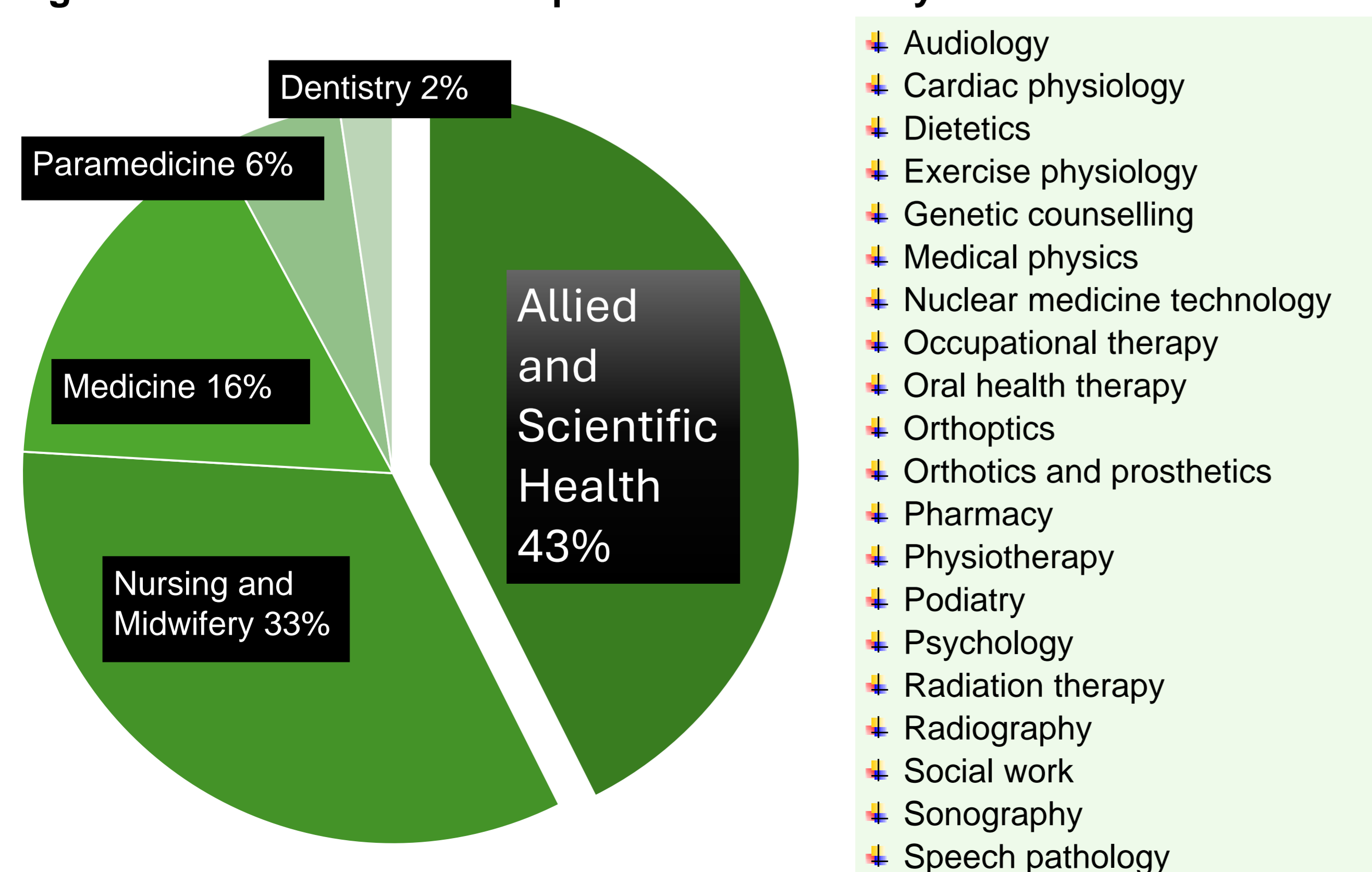
This sub-set was analysed for demographic characteristics, location, geography of origin, and patient story quality improvement aligned with the eight (8) standards for accreditation in healthcare.

RESULTS

1 - Participants

A competitive application process precedes the selection of seventy-two (72) participants from across SA Health each year. Between 2022 and 2024, a total of 216 participants took part in this multidisciplinary program.

Figure 1. Distribution of disciplines for the three years of data



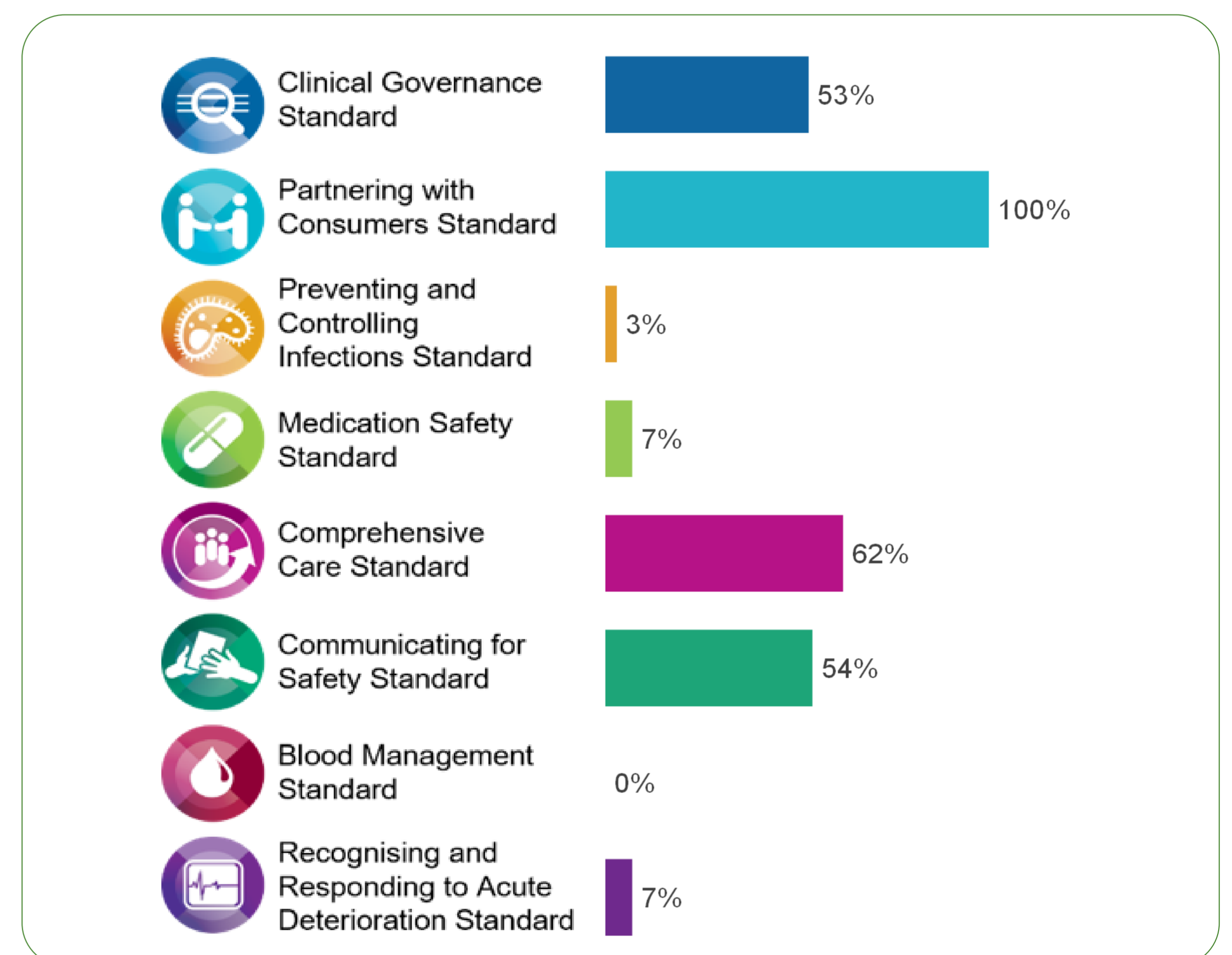
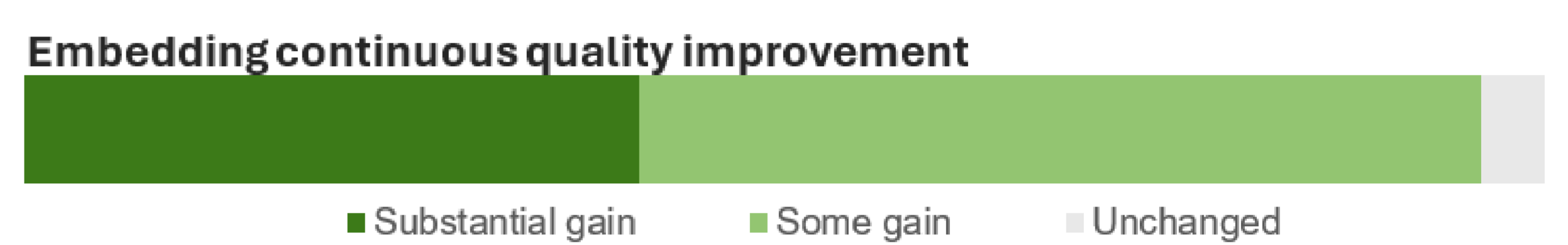
- ✦ Audiology
- ✦ Cardiac physiology
- ✦ Dietetics
- ✦ Exercise physiology
- ✦ Genetic counselling
- ✦ Medical physics
- ✦ Nuclear medicine technology
- ✦ Occupational therapy
- ✦ Oral health therapy
- ✦ Orthotics
- ✦ Orthotics and prosthetics
- ✦ Pharmacy
- ✦ Physiotherapy
- ✦ Podiatry
- ✦ Psychology
- ✦ Radiation therapy
- ✦ Radiography
- ✦ Social work
- ✦ Sonography
- ✦ Speech pathology

2 - Alignments between quality improvement projects and National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards

Quality improvement (QI) projects were reviewed for alignment with the eight (8) National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards (2nd edition).

Each QI project addressed at least one of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. Most projects (96%) aligned with the Partnering with Consumers Standard.

Meeting the learning objective for this activity was achieved for 96% of the participants as shown below:



3 - Participants reported that the program had delivered positive outcomes for their workplace teams:

- 87% used knowledge from the Leading Clinicians Program to improve teamwork in the workplace.
- 74% passed on knowledge from the program to other staff.
- 64% did more to empower team members to improve their own performance.
- 60% improved the quality of supervision and/or training they provided to others.

CONCLUSION

What the participants valued the most: networking opportunities and undertaking patient stories in pairs. They remarked on the game-changing window in their practice and for those around them.

Leadership is a relationship; leadership is everyone's business, and leaders make a difference!

“ I feel I have gained a lot of information and skills, but most importantly I have gained confidence and a great sense of self-worth. ”

“ Insights and suggestions provided by patients...have further bolstered the case for developing a defined and consistent pathway of care. This project has expanded not only within our hospital, but towards the development of a state-wide multi-disciplinary network of clinicians interested in pathways of care for these patients. ”